

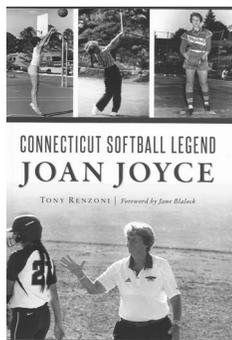
# Marble Columns



Newsletter of the Friends of the James Blackstone Memorial Library



## Spotlight on Branford Author *Do You Remember Joan Joyce?*



Before the success of woman athletes such as Megan Rapinoe, Rebecca Lobo, and Serena Williams, Joan Joyce moved in the quiet circles of her own notable sports accomplishments. At age eight, she was taught how to play softball by her father, but girls, at that time, were barred from playing baseball. Joyce also played basketball, volleyball, and in later years, took up golf—all of which led to her often being compared to Babe Didrikson Zaharias.

Joan, a Waterbury native, joined the renowned fast-pitch softball team, Raybestos Brakettes (Stratford, CT) when she was 13 years old. She then starred on the professional Connecticut Falcons professional team in the 1970s. Joan soon became known in every state of the United States. She also shone in Europe and in China, where she was idolized by the Chinese and pitched a no-hitter in front of 45,000 Chinese fans.

All this and more is described in Tony Renzoni's new book, *Connecticut Softball Legend Joan Joyce*.

Joyce starred as a forward on

numerous basketball teams and travelled across the U.S. with her teams. When she played for the Orange, California, basketball team, Joan set the AAU Tournament record by scoring 67 points in one game (reminder: this is long before the 3-point shot was allowed, as Tony told me).

Joan joined the LPGA tour when she was 37 years old. She actually did not receive golf lessons until she was over 35 years old. This is remarkable because most LPGA golfers begin their golfing career at a very early age (many at 8 – 10 years old). Thirty-seven years ago, Joan set an LPGA (women) and PGA (men) record of needing only 17 putts in a single round of golf. This record still stands today, according to Renzoni. Joan Joyce, born August 18, 1940, is currently the softball coach at Florida Atlantic University.

Tony Renzoni, a Branford resident, has penned a winning testament to Joyce's hidden legend. Tony has a thirty-eight-year career with the federal government. He is the author of *Connecticut Rock 'n' Roll: A History and*

has written over one thousand weekly columns that were published in the Connecticut Post newspaper and its website. Tony expressed that he wrote this book because he felt that it was time that Joan received the true recognition she deserved.

*Connecticut Softball Legend Joan Joyce* is available at Barnes & Noble, Amazon, RJ Julia Bookstore, and other outlets. Tony will be doing book signings in the near future, some of which are with Joan, who is truly one of Connecticut's living legends.

Several dates are listed here:

September 13, 2019, from 12 noon – 1:30 pm – Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Golf Tournament, Western Hills Golf Course – Meet & Greet Book Signing, joined by Joan Joyce.

September 15, 2019, 12 noon -3:00 pm – Barnes & Noble - Meet & Greet Book Signing, joined by Joan Joyce (Milford)

September 16, 2019, 6:30 pm – RJ Julia Book Signing (Madison)

April 19, 2020, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm – Blackstone Library (Branford)

-Alpha Coiro

# Summer Fellowship

Rachel Wells, recipient of a fellowship sponsored by the Friends, worked throughout June and July to digitize all of the photographs from files kept at the library. She also organized and labeled them. She took pictures of old posters, some which were damaged, and digitized them as well. The Friends historical materials are now better organized and ready for filing in special archive boxes.

Rachel, a local resident and recent graduate of the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, was also able to complete a project she had been working on for the Library, during the past two summers.



Rachel Wells with Polly Fitz, History Committee Chairperson

Rachel's long range plans may include study to become an archivist. For the immediate future, she is heading off in a

few weeks to teach English in China for a year.

**Thank you, Rachel!**



*Who and where in the Library?*

*(Last month's mystery photo was of the medallion on the rotunda featuring Harriet Beecher Stowe.)*

## Hit the Books

It's back to school time; for curious minds and food for thought, here are some books worth hitting!

*Leonardo da Vinci*, by Walter Isaacson, is based on thousands of pages from Leonardo da Vinci's astonishing notebooks and new discoveries about his life and works. This is a powerful and insightful story of an exhilarating mind and life. I devoured this informative and entertaining work.

In *Unfreedom of the Press*, with the depth of historical background for which his books are known, Mark R. Levin takes the reader from the early American Patriot Press through the early decades of the Republic to the start of the Progressive Era and the 20th Century, bringing us to where we are today. A groundbreaking work, it's truly enlightening.

David Quammen explains how recent discoveries in molecular biology affect our understanding of evolution and life's history in *The Tangled Tree: A Radical New History of Life*. Yes, we read of scientists' use of DNA sequencing in the '70s and the discovery of HGA, horizontal gene transfer, but at no time is this work baffling or intimidating; it's a grand tale in biology, exciting and fascinating. The Boston Globe called it a "deep and daring intellectual adventure," and I couldn't have said it better!

If the previous three titles, all New York Times Best Sellers, satisfied your intellectual curiosity, perhaps you'd enjoy some delightful whimsy. *The Tower, the Zoo, and the Tortoise*, by Julia Stewart, centers on Balthazar Jones, his wife, and his 120 year old pet tortoise. Tasked with

setting up a zoo for the Queen's exotic animals, Balthazar's eccentric life is suddenly changed. This charming, wonderful book is a delightful read.

*A Different kind of Evil*, by Andrew Wilson, is a follow up to *A Talent for Murder*. Wilson uses one of the genre's most beloved authors, Agatha Christie, as inspiration. This mystery, with all of the classic elements, will suspensefully hold your attention, capture your imagination, and inspire a touch of nostalgia.

*Circe*, by Madeline Miller, is a triumph of storytelling, a subversive retelling of the goddess's story. It's a suspenseful epic of family rivalry, palace intrigue, love and loss. But most importantly, it's the celebration of an dauntless woman in a man's world.

**Read on!**

# Men Behind the Hard Hats

If you've been in the library during the past 8 months, you'll recognize Craig Ayotte and Logan Flis. Craig is the Project Superintendent from Downes Construction, general contractor for our renovation project. Craig ensures that all work is completed safely and according to schedule. He also acts as liaison between the library staff and contractor. Working with such great mentor, Logan should have a long and successful career ahead. As to the man in the middle of these two, he was the library's original benefactor...we'll give you two guesses!



Craig Ayotte and Logan Flis of Downes Construction  
Photo by Diane Puchalski

## Autumn Leaves Lots of Books

Start raking them. Thousands and thousands of books are for sale! The Friends of the James Blackstone Library are ready to launch their 2019 fundraiser at the end of September.

Look for the giant tent on the Branford green on Thursday, 9/26 (7:00-10:00 p), Friday, 9/27, Saturday, 9/28 (9:00a-10:00p); and Sunday, 9/29 (12:00p-3:00p).

Over 70,000 books, CDs, DVDs in all genres including mystery, science fiction, fantasy, biography, horror, cooking, self-help, the arts, romance, how to, children's books and more will be available for your perusal and purchase.

Prices are as follows: Hardcover-\$3, Trade paperback-\$2, Coffee table-\$5+, DVD-\$2, CD-\$1, Pocket paperback-\$0.50, Children's (most)-\$.50+, Prices may vary. Vintage, special coffee table books, and sets priced individually. Take advantage of these fantastic prices for home, school, gifts or donations!

This year there are two special features:

- Bargain Book Night ~ Saturday, 9/28, 7:00-10:00 pm. All books 1/2 price!
- Fill our Bag Day ~ Sunday, 9/29, Only \$10 per bag (provided)!

If you want to be part of the excitement, volunteer at the book sale. Contact Pam Roy at **JBMLfriendsvolunteer@gmail.com**.

New memberships are always welcome. If you would like to be part of this effort, contact [friends@blackstonelibrary.org](mailto:friends@blackstonelibrary.org) or [facebook.com/JBMLfriends](https://www.facebook.com/JBMLfriends) for more information.

### 2019—2020 Friends Board of Directors Meeting Dates:

August 20  
September 17  
October 22  
November 19  
December 17  
January 21  
February 18  
March 17  
April 21  
May 19  
June 16

Meetings take place on Tuesday, 5:30 PM at the Blackstone Library.



**IT'S BOOK SALE TIME  
UNDER THE BIG TOP  
ON THE BRANFORD GREEN!**

Thursday, Sept. 26th~  
7:00p-10:00p (Open to all)

Friday, Sept. 27th~9:00a-10:00p

Saturday, Sept. 28th~  
9:00a-10:00p

Sunday, Sept. 29th~12:00p-3:00p



**Bargain Book Night ~ Saturday, 9/28, 7:00-10:00 pm. All books 1/2 price!**  
**Fill our Bag Day ~ Sunday, 9/29, Only \$10 per bag (provided)!**

**PRICES:** Hardcover-\$3, Trade paperback-\$2, Coffee table-\$5+, DVD-\$2, CD-\$1, Pocket paperback-\$0.50, Children's (most)-\$.50+, Prices may vary. Vintage, special books, and sets priced individually.

Over 70,000 books, CDs, DVDs in all genres: mystery, biography, science fiction, romance, historical fiction, self-help, how to, and more... Take advantage of these fantastic prices for home, school, gifts or donations!

<https://www.facebook.com/JBMLfriends/>





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## New Entry Open

We are entering the final phase of our renovation project! It is on time and budget to be complete by January 2020.



*The new entry was completed on September 9th.*

Work is finished on the first and second floors. In July, the entire nonfiction collection moved into the former reference room and the new history room was finished. Vending machines for the café are arriving soon.

The Friends have resumed meeting at the library and are using one of the new conference rooms.

We've received many positive comments, and our patrons and staff are looking forward to the new space.

There is still a lot of work to be done on the ground floor. With the new entry open, work will begin to create the new fiction & popular materials area, and finally the children's space and auditorium. Staff have worked incredibly hard to accommodate the myriad of changes, often at the last minute, and our pa-

trons have been flexible as well. We have a great construction crew and are so happy to be in the home stretch!

**Many thanks for your support of this project!**

*Karen Jensen  
Library Director*

### Board of Directors 2019—2020:

Mary Hally, President  
Al Bertoline, Vice President  
Callista Stoddard, Treasurer  
Jonathan Grande,  
Assistant Treasurer  
& Membership Chair  
Hatsie Mahoney, Secretary  
Barbara Barrett  
Ellen Carucci  
Alpha Coiro  
Jonathan Clark  
Joe Genua  
Doug Hanlon  
Andy McKirdy  
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John Smith  
Judy Stebbins  
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Helen Wong  
  
Karen Jensen, Library Director  
Member Ex-Officio